UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

Our "Christianity"? - - *Jesse H. Holmes*

Towards a New Orientation - *David M. Bloch*

The Negro in American Democracy and in National Defense - - *William Pickens*

The Norwegian Church Struggle - *Kurt D. Singer*

Negative Independent-Radicalism - - - - - - - - - *Victor S. Yarros*

Tributes to Ralph Cheyney

By Robert Whitaker and John Haynes Holmes

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JOHN HAYNES HOLMES, *Editor* CURTIS W. REESE, *Managing Editor*

Declaration

In this time of growing tension of opinion and intolerance of spirit, it is appropriate that UNITY should reaffirm its position as a journal of liberal opinion.

UNITY is interested in no political party or platform, is bound to no school of philosophy or theology, is the organ of no sect or denomination, and is the voice of no organized movement. Rather is UNITY dedicated to certain underlying principles, namely, freedom, fellowship, and character in religion. It seeks the fulfilment of certain ideals, namely, representative democracy, peace, brotherhood, the commonwealth of man which is the kingdom of God on earth.

In dedication to its principles and in pursuit of its ideals, UNITY maintains the rule of liberty. Its editors, editorial contributors, and correspondents speak with unfettered freedom the convictions of their own minds within the general framework of a journal of liberal opinion. The writers of articles, reviews, and poems present their own ideas, which may, at times, be at variance with those of the editors. UNITY would repress no utterance and control no argument that is competent and honest, for it is skeptical of conformity and averse to authority, which always tend to hamper individual liberty. It is happy in those diversities of gifts and ideas which are the glory of the one spirit.

In this period of trial and crisis, UNITY would unite anew its editors and readers in the service of *Character* which is the substance of religion, *Freedom* which is its life, and *Fellowship* which is its goal. Thus would we vindicate our country, our civilization, our culture, religious and lay, in a period when all alike are threatened with extinction.

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The Field

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."

"Merry Christmas to You All!"

Notwithstanding the solemnities and the anxieties which increasingly press upon life with increasing years, notwithstanding the grewsome haste and attendant weariness, the more bargaining, the more advertising, and the consequent feverish commercialism that threaten this season of relaxation and good will, the most fitting salutation yet is the good old Saxon cry of "Merrie Christmas to you!"

Let the choiring angels, the adoring cattle, the pilgriming magi have their annual sway unbidden, for poetry is more comprehensive than history, truer than philosophy. It, too, deals with stubborn facts that challenge the respect of scientists.

But the legends of the Christ-child and the songs of the Christmas season become vital only when they are related to the life that now is and the duties at hand. The ideal to be vital must ever be rooted in the present tense. The Christmas of doctrine, of sect, aye, of Christianity itself in its boastful and excluding conceits, is not the "Merry Christmas." The Merry Christmas is based in the harmonies, the fraternities, and fellowship which give significance to the name of this paper and is the perpetual quest in these columns. It is because we believe all the Christian denominations are identical at the center, and because we believe that all systems of religion that have enlisted the confidences and enthusiasms of mankind have more in common than in difference, we labor to minimize the antagonistic and to emphasize the unities. If in the exercise of the freedom of criticism we sometimes seem to be more mindful of the shortcomings than of the achievements of our brethren, if we would seem disrespectful to forms, doctrines, and movements which so many consider of vital interest, it is because we would fain make three hundred and sixty-five Christmas days in the year and ring the joy bells of Peace on Earth and Good Will to Men in all the steeples, in all lands, all the year round. . . .

—From an editorial in UNITY
December 21, 1905.

Utopia is not always to be a land of "nowhere," but it is to be the realm of the here. However, the angels' song which the shepherds heard is to be interpreted, the more true is it to the fact that it was prophecy, a terrestrial prophecy.

UNITY

"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"

Volume CXXVII DECEMBER, 1941 No. 10

Editorial Comment

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

I

The passing of the Neutrality bill, amending out of existence the original law, may seem to be the last straw which breaks the camel's back of peace. The President, who sponsored and signed the original Neutrality Act and has thus now destroyed his own handiwork, is given a free hand to get us as far into the war as he may choose to take us. But it is doubtful if he moves very fast or far. It was months ago that, with immense solemnity, he declared on the radio a "state of emergency," but it never changed the situation by an iota. The fact is, the vote on the neutrality amendments was fearfully menacing to the war policies of the administration. Only the utmost endeavors of the White House—a special letter from the President, and all kinds of threats and promises behind the scenes—carried the bill at all. And then a change in ten votes out of a total of 406 would have defeated the bill. All this means that the country is still hopelessly divided on the war issue. President Roosevelt himself professed to see "no sign of disunity" in this vote. But Mr. Willkie was terribly disturbed by "the close vote," which he said was "unfortunate." And Raymond Clapper, all-out supporter of the President's foreign policy, found the vote much "too close." He wrote:

> The vote does not show the measure of national agreement that a free people should have to go into war. The administration cannot consider the whole country behind its policy with such a close division. To go to war a democratic government should have a case strong enough to win a more clean-cut margin. * * * I do not see how the vote can be considered as anything like a demonstration of national solidarity.

So the fight for peace is not lost. More than ever now must the peace forces of the country rally to sustain and lead that tremendous body of public sentiment which is unshakably opposed to war. For two years, now, this sentiment has withstood every attempt to stampede and break it up. The administration is no nearer to having a united country today than it was in 1940. Of course the time may come when Washington will "turn on the heat" and force the people to give their support, as Hitler has long since done in Germany. But there are few signs of this as yet. So long as the President on a clean-cut issue of war and peace, can get no clear mandate from his own Congress—loses the support, as a matter of fact, of 20 per cent of his own party—we may still have hope of peace.

II

Into the dread winter moves the mounting horror of this war. Any one picture of what will be going on these next six months is sufficient to freeze the blood and paralyze the will. The eastern front, for example!—millions of Russian and German soldiers fighting, bleeding and dying amid the icy blasts and raging storms of the fiercest arctic area in Europe. The war at sea!—the northern Atlantic dotted with sinking ships, sailors strangling to death in frozen waters, and submarine crews writhing in final agonies of suffocation and drowning. The battles in the air!—the pick of all the fairest young men of the belligerent nations, burning alive or smashed to pulp in the ceaseless conflict for the mastery of the heavens. The bombing of cities in England and Germany alike!—tens of thousands of innocent civilians, women as well as men, children as well as women, torn into bleeding fragments which must be salvaged in pails and shovels. The starving of vast populations in a dozen different countries!—old and young, sick, infirm and aged, in France, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Russia, Spain, China, languishing without food, and slowly dying of hunger or disease. And everywhere the millions without homes, or property, or any hope!—the refugees in strange and dreadful places who look only on hearts as cold and cruel as the sleety skies. Then, add to all this toll of physical misery the greater toll of spiritual havoc—the hate, the lust, the intolerance, the beastlike ferocity which kill the finer sentiments of man's soul as effectually as the winter kills vegetation! This, in words too feeble even to suggest reality, is what lies before us this coming winter. And the war, we are told, must go on—as though, by traveling the road of death, we could come at last to life! I cannot believe it. I would think myself insane if I did believe it. We tried it all in the last war, and only got this war as our

reward. There is nothing that can save us in this struggle but the earliest possible peace—peace at least before the winter has reaped its awful toll of physical and spiritual death! I know the price of such a peace. And I also know what most people seem so easily to forget—namely, the price of war. *This* war! It must have been some such estimate that Cicero had in mind, when he said—"An unjust peace is better than the most just war." I take my stand with Cicero—with the single correction that no war, of course, can be just!

III

The mysteries of this war! How the nations keep going financially, for example? The answer in the case of Germany is not so difficult, perhaps, since the Nazis have built up a self-contained economy. Furthermore, in their unparalleled conquests, they have looted their victims on a scale almost unknown even to the barbarian conquerors of old. But the case of Britain is different—and here the answer, we suppose, is to be found in the fact that Britain is living on accumulated capital. That there is an end to this sort of thing is indicated by an article in the March (1941) issue of the *Bankers Magazine,* which has just now come to my attention. This article, written by Dr. Herbert Spero, of the College of the City of New York, points out that from August, 1939, to the close of 1940 "the total gold and dollar resources [of the United Kingdom] declined from $4,483,000,000 to $2,167,000,000." In the nearly two years that have passed since this date, the decline has of course been going right on and has been met only by the action of the United States in "supplementing Britain's resources with our own." Another resource, of course, is the English standard of living. This can always be lowered as a part of the accumulated capital to be drawn upon. Yet the limit here is as definite as in the case of actual money or treasure. "A nation's living standard," writes Dr. Spero, "can only be reduced to a limited extent before social and political unrest follows." All this means that "the terrific cost of the war," to use Dr. Spero's phrase, is the equivalent of ruin. Successful or unsuccessful on the field of battle, we are moving straight into bankruptcy, which means exhaustion of resources, repudiation of debts, devaluation of the currency, loss of securities and investments, and general poverty, despair, and death. This is the process now relentlessly going on; and if the war is not stopped, the process will complete itself ere victory can be achieved anywhere. This is what our pro-war friends never think about. They insist upon fighting on to the bitter end, and never once stop to count the cost. That cost is well suggested by St. Augustine, in his *The City of God,* wherein he speaks of "two mighty and powerful nations using all their might and power to reciprocal ruin." And then comments as to how "the conquerors are ever more like to the conquered than otherwise."

IV

Now that Russia is well launched into the war as the ally of Britain, it may be well to ask ourselves what Russia is going to get out of this war if she wins her part of it. For we may be sure that Russia is not going to fight through to victory for nothing. Stalin will not be overmuch interested in Roosevelt's four freedoms or other democratic aims, but he will be very much interested in bulwarking Russia against future attack, in gaining compensation for the losses incurred in the conflict, and in enlarging Russia to the farthest bounds of triumphant nationalism. The Soviet dictator will sit side by side with Churchill and Roosevelt at the peace table, and will have much to say and find plenty to take away. For example:

(1) Russia will annex Finland, and thus stamp out the independence of the Finns for perhaps another hundred years.

(2) Russia will annex Latvia, Lithuania, and Esthonia, and thus restore these countries for good and all to the tyranny from which they escaped in 1919.

(3) Russia will annex Poland, or at least that part of Poland which has belonged to Russia since the Third Partition. In either case, she will destroy the independent Poland, the restoration of which was promised to Paderewski in his entombment.

(4) Russia will insist, in one way or another, on dominating the Balkans, taking over or controlling the Dardenelles, and in general becoming the master power in all of southeastern Europe.

(5) Russia will probably demand East Prussia, and, in any dismemberment of Germany, insist upon her ample share of territory.

(6) Russia will probably move openly and permanently into Mongolia, and perhaps take over Manchukuo from Japan.

In short, Russia will become incomparably the greatest European-Asiatic power, and confront the world with a communist totalitarianism as terrible as the present Nazi totalitarianism. All this if Russia wins her fight with Germany! Does this mean that I do not want her to win, but desire a German victory? Not at all! As a pacifist I do not think at all in terms of victory or defeat, save as I cling fast to the Wilsonian principle of "peace without victory." It simply means that this is what this war has gotten us into. This is what war does to us when we consent to and join in it.

V

Shailer Mathews, who died just too late to be memorialized in our last issue, will ever be numbered among that remarkable group of men in the last half-century who awakened the church to the meaning and importance of the social gospel of Christianity. It was a noble list of names—Francis G. Peabody, Washington Gladden, Josiah Strong, Walter Rauschenbusch, to denote only a few—and Shailer Mathews was one of the most admired among them. His influence, both as a teacher and an author, was remarkable. A whole generation of students passed through his classroom, and all received the stamp of his authentic genius. Book after book poured from his pen, and to the very end held the attention alike of scholars and the general public. His range of interest was extraordinary—a short history of the French Revolution remains still

one of his most successful publications! But Christianity and its social applications were the dominant concern of his mind, and here he made contributions to the religious thought of our time which will be long and gratefully remembered. He was characterized by an abundant learning which, like a running stream, was ever fresh and never stale nor stagnant. He had an easy flowing style, and exceptional powers of clear and simple elucidation. His convictions were emphatic—liberal rather than radical, but always in the van of progress. It is the sign of the vitality of religion when it produces scholars of the Mathews type. He and his associates of the generation which spanned the close of the nineteenth century and the opening of the twentieth century, did a good job. It will not have to be done again. They thought that they had done a final as well as a complete job. The days of the Kingdom were at hand! Then came the war of 1914, and the engulfment of centuries of progress. Shailer Mathews lived far into this catastrophic age. He saw the worst, but never despaired. He kept right on preaching the gospel of justice and the law of love as the only solution of our ills. In his latter days his thought moved straight into pacifism, though he never became prominent in the pacifist movement. The classroom and the study were his appointed field. There a light shone clear through many years for the guidance of men's minds.

Jottings

By what right does Secretary Hull tell Finland to get out of the fight against Russia? By the same right that Chancellor Hitler told Roumania to get into the fight against Russia. The right of *war!* When war is once under way no small nation has any rights which the large nations are bound to respect. America bullies and badgers just like all the rest.

When Mr. La Guardia sent out a "canned sermon" for use on Civilian Defense Sunday he put up a real challenge to the ministers. And it was a little disquieting to see how many were willing to take this pap from Washington. Perhaps "his master's voice" is not a mere ad., after all.

The new successor to Beecher in the pulpit of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, has announced that there will be no mention of war or of Hitler at his Sunday morning services. Imagine if Beecher had announced that there would be no mention of slavery at *his* Sunday morning services!

"You can't do business with Hitler," say the interventionists. This may be true! But it comes with poor grace and little effectiveness from those who are now doing business with Stalin and Tojo.

When I went to school and studied geography, Iran was called Persia, Thailand was known as Siam, and Iceland was in the eastern and not in the western hemisphere. How times do change!

The Reverend Lee W. Lynne, minister of Waverly Heights Congregational Church, Portland, Oregon, writes the following in *Fellowship*:

> The Church, which was to be the Bride of Christ, has become the concubine of Caesar, and, when his sadistic passion requires, she submits to him.
>
> JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

Our "Christianity"?

JESSE H. HOLMES

As one who has listened to hundreds of radio sermons and read scores of sermon outlines in the Monday newspapers, I have been driven to the conviction that so-called Christian doctrine as now taught, and Christian churches as now organized and directed, are a handicap and a burden to our civilization. They seem to me to have lost, if they ever had it, intelligent and courageous leadership toward the great values of human life. Meaningless phrases and irrational theologies have been moulded into rigid, authoritative institutions perverting and stultifying the adventurous, creative, spirit which distinguishes man from the rest of the animal kingdom. They turn his attention from the splendid possibilities of our mysterious life and toward a mythical, improbable life after death. Over all presides a despotic, unjust, and irrational deity of the medieval king type, who must be worshipped by flattery and blind obedience.

These are not pleasant things to say, and I have resisted for years the feeling that they must be strongly and publicly said. I regret that they will hurt or anger many for whom I have respect and affection. I ask them to believe that in the statement to follow I have tried to set down the truth as I see it; and that they answer not by epithet but in sincere effort to find and clarify the truth. If they believe truth to be attained only by authoritative revelation I hope they will say so, and tell why they accept authority and who is to interpret it.

I call attention to the fact that most of the selfish love of wealth and luxury, most of the political falsehood and corruption, most of the brutal and destructive wars,

most of the race and class hatreds of the world center about the parts of the world where organized Christianity is the strongest and has had the longest time in which to exert its influence. Moreover it has seldom made any considerable effort to oppose these evils, and has often supported them. Neither wealth nor political corruption nor war has or has had anything to fear from the Christian church.

We do not often see attempted statements of orthodox Christian theology in plain unemotional terms for the purpose of getting at its actual meaning. I propose to try the dangers of making such a statement, and will welcome corrections.

God is an infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent being, wholly benevolent toward mankind, whom he has created in his own image. He consists of three "persons" but is of one "substance"; neither person nor substance is defined or definable. Neither of these terms, nor any hint of this doctrine appears in either Old or New Testament. The phrases appeared first in the controversies and heresies of the second and third centuries, and the final statement was established after bitter conflict at the Council of Nicea in 321 A. D. The Greek words used by the Council were *ousia* and *hypostasis,* which were later loosely rendered into Latin as *substantia* and *persona,* and still later into English as "substance" and "person." The original words overlap in meaning and a reversal of the translations would not have made much difference.

The first person of the Trinity is "the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth" by the creed, although the Gospel of John says of the second person "all things were made by him," following a Greek instead of a Jewish concept. Man was the climax of this creation, made in the Divine image by an omniscient and omnipotent being, knowing the future and able to decide it. Yet Satan, who is one of his sons, spoils his plans, and man sins by violating God's arbitrary orders. Although he is wholly benevolent toward man the omnipotent being has made him so badly that he fails at the test, becomes "deceitful and desperately wicked" and passes that condition on to all his descendants. God would like to save all men, but cannot manage it; he arranges however an unjust and illogical scheme by which he can save a few—not because they deserve it but because he chooses so to do. I should hardly say "arranges" because it was all planned out from eternity: sin, punishment, and salvation were all exactly what he had planned, and Satan was not his enemy but his servant and ally. The scheme for the salvation of a few is an intricate mixture of rituals from various theologies, and various medieval judicial procedures, centering on the incarnation and sacrificial death of the second person of the Trinity.

The second person of the Trinity is Jesus, the son of a Jewish married woman, asserted without any evidence to have been a virgin. The creeds say that his father was the first person of the Trinity; Matthew and Luke say "she was found with child of the Holy Ghost," —the third person of the Trinity—and later trace his descent from David through Joseph. He was baptized by John the Baptist (or only announced by him according to the Gospel of John), and lived for a short time the life of a prophet and evangelist, various miracles accompanying his career. He was arrested and put to death by the Romans as a dangerous claimant of the Jewish throne. The Jewish priests and their wealthy backers had demanded his death, but the common people had accepted him as a leader and perhaps as the Messiah. His execution was a great sin although it was absolutely necessary for saving even a small group of human beings. Without the actual shedding of blood God could not (because he would not) save any. He remains as a remote being, unreasonable, terrible, and threatening, though a loving father, while Christ sits at his right hand with no special function until Judgment Day.

The third person of the Trinity—the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost—is abroad in the world, being that element of the Divine being which deals with man in this world period. He takes little part in the large affairs of man —war, pestilence, famine, poverty—but is ready to comfort (not relieve) those who call on him. The preachers of Christianity never succeed in maintaining or understanding their own theology; their petitions are seldom addressed to the Holy Spirit but rather to the Father or to Christ, who are far more vivid and interesting.

"Christian" worship consists in flattery, promises, and petitions, expressed often in terms of extreme servility. It has allied itself with splendid music, architecture, and the arts generally, all of which has led it into further alliance with wealth and luxury. Many Protestant sects made their start among the poor as did the early church; and like it they tend to combination with the rich and powerful. Nearly every age has its missions for the poor, its spontaneous revival movements, which cannot be overlooked and usually settle into poor relations of organized religion. These are adjusted to the need for excitement in dull lives, and to the longing for power felt more or less by all of us. A very low grade of preaching with loud promises of glory, and of the future misery of their enemies, is supplemented by music of about the same quality, and aims to excite the audience to noisy demonstration and to various forms of hysteria. The prosperous middle-class churches are usually dull and dignified, but assume the same irrational and irresponsible deity. He is benevolent and all-knowing, but he takes little notice of human suffering and misery unless it is especially called to his attention by prayer, when he may or may not relieve the situation. Thus days of prayer may induce him to stop wars or to end drouth; but the wars may drag on for years and the drouth ruin the lives of thousands. The Christian world is divided into hundreds of sects, many of them mutually hostile, each claiming to have the truth that will save mankind, and none of them able to tell just what they mean by "truth" or by "salvation." The latest great gathering of representatives of most of the great Protestant sects with some others, agreed that the essential of Christian fellowship is "acceptance of Christ as God and Saviour." None of the nouns are defined or could be, even to the satisfaction of those who coined the phrase.

I propose to a fairly intelligent people of a partially scientific age—a people easily carried away by words and phrases but feebly striving for meanings too—that all this is a sad mess of ancient and medieval superstition which should speedily be relegated to the storage rooms of the museum of history. We should stop the pretense of awe or even respect for teachings which lack even a slight amount of evidence or probability. We should substitute a religion based on actual, repeatable, describable, and testable experience, and which has some connection with the genuine values of life: not an absurd and impossible life in a stupid, idle

heaven, but a rich, active, adventurous life in the world we live in.

But is such a religion possible? and is any religion even desirable? Certainly, it is even indispensable, if it means active loyalty to the great values of life: to the highest possible happiness and development of mankind now and hereafter. Present-day religions do not further such loyalty, but rather hinder and condemn it, catering to that desire for freedom from responsibility which does so easily beset us. Our highest loyalties are due (1) to the struggle for understanding and for its statement in language for future testing and expansion, and (2) to the increase of harmony and beauty in the world, both in material things which affect our senses—as in color, sound, taste, and fragrance—and above all in the constant remaking of ourselves to fit that world and our fellow men, for greater happiness and greater growth. The accurate formulating of our ends and of the tested ways for attaining them is the function of philosophy and the sciences. The more difficult task of holding us to the higher loyalties is that of religion. Not the discovery of truth but the patient using of it for the more abundant life is its task. We humans have broken through from the meagre life of the animal kingdom into a new dimension: the knowledge of good and evil with a special magnetic attraction toward the good. The ancient Hebrew story-teller regarded this knowledge as evil and its attainment as a sin which has stained all human life. In fact it is the great distinguishing feature of manhood. Of course we hate it and long for the lazy irresponsibility of Eden and of the animal kingdom. We create institutions to relieve us of the need for making choices: religions, which give us lists of "Thou shalt nots," governments which give us laws, social institutions which give us customs. We are urged to regard these as sufficient and final. Many there be who gratefully sink back into the animal kingdom, accepting blind irrational conduct as the higher life, and calling the acceptance "faith." But man still feels the drawing power of his new world—hears the "voice of God," sees the "inner light," experiences the superhappiness of following an intelligible guidance toward foreseen and chosen ends. It is the old, old struggle of prophet against priest, of the free spirit of evolving manhood against the dead weight of his static institutions. It is light against darkness, growth against decay, life against death, the higher loyalty to the highest good, against the lower loyalties of sects and nations.

We find it hard to maintain our higher loyalties and we look in vain to our religious institutions for any thrilling call to adventurous and creative living. The ever active "evangelistic" revivals appeal primarily to the ignorant and miserable classes, who long for something picturesque and exciting and find it in vivid hells, heavens, and Judgment Days. They are easily induced to view life from the side lines, making ready for the final spectacle and the dividing of mankind into an aristocracy of irresponsible happiness and a democracy of everlasting misery—neither deserved. One may hear all this and worse preached to thousands or millions on the radio almost any time of the day or night. I have heard many such teachings presented by children in their "teens," who state the "truth" with all the authority of an assumed infallibility. The middle-class churches are more cautious about these absurdities, but they are implied and assumed if not asserted. They encourage a passive acceptance of evil in a lost world, and a selfish acceptance of privilege on the part of the saved. I read in a recently published sermon in one of our great cities: "We should find it especially easy to be grateful to God, when we look abroad and see the miseries of war-torn Europe." Another says, "prayer is our chief defense"; and all unite in days of prayer for peace, which assume that God may be induced to stop the war if enough of us beg for peace. Our religious institutions give practically no leadership for our faltering, straying humanity. Praying God to stop war, they themselves support war in every Christian country; they read the Sermon on the Mount where condemnation of violence and of wealth is the most conspicuous element, and they join in and encourage the forceful pursuit of wealth, neglecting or excusing the plight of the poor. They give no effective support, or even understanding, to the problems of labor, of political corruption, of class conflict, of race prejudice.

I am saying these things unhappily, knowing that I am myself in the groups I am condemning. Where I have said "they" I should have said "we." My own county has been governed by a criminal gang for half a century, and my own religious organization not only does not oppose it but its members actively support it. In my neighboring city a few miles away there is hunger and cold, disease and drunkenness, all unrelieved and rather resented by the hundreds of churches. A Negro slum not a mile away remains year after year a place of filth, of vice, of deterioration. There are plenty of Christian churches all about.

Cannot we do better? Cannot we find and develop among us a spirit of unselfish service, of loyalty to the oppressed, of responsibility for a richer, nobler civilization? If we continue to hide behind an alleged belief in a devil's world, a lost humanity, an irrational and arbitrary deity, undeserved heaven and undeserved hell, there is nothing to be done. But if those who reject all this medieval rubbish will join heartily in a real world-wide effort for an uplifted manhood; if they refuse to continue systems which involve contests in indiscriminate killing and destruction; if they will dedicate themselves to a general cooperation in mutual service, refusing all incitements to seek power over each other; if they will accept the adventure of lives everywhere seeking harmony, good will, understanding, friendliness; if they will turn aside from all claims of supermen for super-rights and privileges whether in religion, in politics, in industry, or in society, then indeed we may renew and revive the purposes of prophets, statesmen, scholars, scientists, and good men since the world began.

This would be a real religion.

"I doubt the possibility, or propriety, of settling the religion of Jesus Christ in the models of man-made creeds and dogmas. It was a spirit in the life that he laid stress on and taught, if I read aright. I know I see it to be so with me.

"I cannot without mental reservations assent to long and complicated creeds and catechisms. If the church would ask simply for assent to the Saviour's statement of the substance of the law: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself,'—that church would I gladly unite with."

—*Abraham Lincoln.*

Towards a New Orientation

DAVID M. BLOCH

Though facing what is undoubtedly the most critical period in human history, we stand confused and bewildered, unable to make a definite decision. At a time when prompt and purposeful action is so urgently needed to solve the many problems confronting us, we seem to lack the will to go forward. Dissatisfied with the present state of affairs, most of us either look with nostalgic longing to the past, hoping for some miracle to bring back the good old days; or having abandoned all hope, are altogether unconcerned about the future.

We need but examine the records of ancient Rome, Sparta, and Babylon to find that each one of those civilizations collapsed because, like us, its people lacked the courage to defend it. Our own civilization may meet a similar fate if we continue ostrich-like to bury our heads in the sand, refusing to take the necessary steps to prevent its downfall. Before we can do this, however, it will first be necessary to ascertain the causes that brought about the present crisis. Otherwise we shall only be moving around in a circle, and will fail to reach any definite objective.

It is well to remember, as we tackle the problem, that though we are living today in a presumably unbelieving world, man is by nature a worshipping being. Since the dawn of history he has been making sacrifices on strange altars, paying homage to unknown gods. They were not only his practical guides throughout his long, arduous struggle for survival, but his spiritual prompters as well. Those deities were not always admirable, to be sure. Only as man rose in the scale of evolution did they become more civilized. What a leap, for instance, from the primitive gods of the Aztecs to the modern Christian or Hebrew deity. Yet even the crudest gods represented some sort of moral order. Figments of man's imagination, they constituted his ideal of perfection. And without some ideal to guide him, man would never have emerged from his animal state or freed himself from tyranny and oppression.

"Let my people go," Pharoah was admonished when he persisted in keeping the children of Israel in bondage. This warning came from an inspired leader who, cherishing liberty above all else, refused to compromise with the enemy. The ideal of liberty was too precious to bargain over. It was everything or nothing. Moses was firmly determined that his people should cease being slaves.

We are all familiar with the outcome of that struggle. A mighty dynasty founded on temporal power was unable to withstand the dynamic spiritual force launched against it by a small army of rebellious slaves. Aroused to action, they finally succeeded in freeing themselves from Egyptian domination.

More than once throughout history has the cause of righteousness thus been vindicated. An illustrious example was that of the early Christians in their silent battle against imperial Rome. Despised and persecuted, a mere handful of them succeeded in converting the proud pagans, and saw their faith spread over nearly half of the globe.

That new religion founded upon the democratic ideal, first promulgated in ancient Judea, was destined later, as we know, to exert a great influence upon the Western world. But for Christianity it is doubtful whether mankind would have advanced as rapidly as it did along the path of progress. This, of course, does not imply that Christianity was without its faults. Some of us are only too well aware of its grave sins against humanity. Yet in spite of the Crusades, the Inquisition, the Thirty Years' War, and the intolerance and obscurantism of the Church, the cardinal principles of the Christian faith remain unshakable. No Voltaire, much less an Ingersoll, could invalidate the wise counsel of the Hebrew prophets or the beatitudes of Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Had it not been for those inspired teachings, Western man might never have undertaken his great experiment in democracy.

And we ourselves, especially those of us who belong to the older generation, are largely to blame if the experiment did not turn out as promising as we had anticipated. Too many of us were inclined to take democracy for granted, unconscious of the pernicious influences that were sapping her strength and retarding her progress. Even when profound thinkers such as Nordau, Spengler, and Tolstoy saw the handwriting on the wall and sounded the alarm, we preferred to ignore their warning. It was so much more pleasant to remain in blissful ignorance and cling to the cherished illusion that "God's in his heaven and all's well with the world."

But no amount of bolstered optimism could diminish the gravity of the situation. The fact remained that Western civilization had been on trial for some time. With the invention of the machine and the materialistic outlook of the universe that followed in its wake, came a serious departure from the democratic way of life. It was those two factors, as we shall presently see, that were largely instrumental in bringing about the state of moral anarchy which helped to pave the way for totalitarianism.

Prior to the development of machine industry, man living under a simple, agricultural economy was, relatively speaking, a free agent. Though sometimes compelled to labor incessantly in order to sustain himself, he drew satisfaction from the fact that he was his own master—that whatever he produced was the product of his own hands and brains. Having limited wants and residing close to nature, his mind was at liberty to roam at will and speculate on the unknown. His belief in the democratic ideal never faltered.

With the beginning of machine production, however, man's freedom was greatly curtailed. As time went on he became more and more dependent on the machine. It not only supplied him with food, clothes, heat and light, but ran his errands and even did his thinking. Harnessed to electricity and steam, the mute Goliath moving at a terrific pace was the logical forerunner of the modern dictator.

Far more destructive to democracy than the machine was the wave of materialistic thinking which swept over Europe all through the nineteenth century. The leading scientists and philosophers of that period—men like Faraday, Haeckel, Marx and Engels who on every occasion stressed man's animal origin, and placed matter preëminently above mind—probably never dreamed of the dire effect their teachings would have on the coming generation. For as a result of their teachings, the religious faith that helped to keep the torch of liberty burning for so many centuries was gradually being undermined. The democratic ideal, if not altogether

discredited, was losing its potency as a moral force. Mankind was left at the mercy of a blind, relentless fate.

It was not surprising, therefore, that when Western man had lost his belief in the eternal verities he should have turned, especially in times of stress, towards any doctrine that offered some way out of his dilemma.

For a while communism held the center of the stage, and it looked as though it might take the place of the Christian-democratic ideal. With the crusading spirit of the early Christians, the communists, promising to regenerate mankind and usher in the millenium, tried their utmost to convert the world to their way of thinking. But in spite of their tempting appeal communism failed to get a foothold in countries outside of Russia. Even there the bulk of the population were reluctant in accepting the new dispensation. This was not due solely, as some naively believed, to the fact that the rulers of Russia failed to live up to the original communist program. The truth of the matter is, that the Russian experiment would have failed and communism been discredited even had the Bolsheviks followed faithfully the gospel *á la* Marx and Lenin. No credo whose principal tenets slight man's spiritual heritage and rely primarily on force to achieve its goal is capable, for any length of time, to hold a people's allegiance, or usher in a free society.

Nor is Nazi-fascism, towards which so many people are now turning, capable of creating a better life for us and posterity. More ruthless than the parent from which it sprang, this bastard child of communism pays homage to crude pagan gods of antiquity, preaches the gospel of hate, the enslavement of labor and glorifies war.

It should be obvious by now that our salvation cannot come either from a materialistic science that worships at the shrine of blind, economic, or material energies or from a crude, pagan philosophy which deifies brute force. We must realize that though man is an economic and combative animal, he is at the same time a spiritual being endowed with almost divine attributes. Unless we grasp this simple truism, it will be impossible for us to revamp our present chaotic social system.

One of our greatest needs today is a spiritual orientation towards life. When we understand that man possesses a better self capable of transcending his animality, we shall cease following false prophets. We will turn away from Machiavelli, Nietzsche, Marx, and Lenin, and be guided by such men as Jesus, Socrates, Spinoza, and Jefferson. We will choose the latter because they and not the former have proved themselves the true representatives of the good life.

If this good life is ever to be achieved and civilization is to survive we will have to rekindle anew the democratic faith. We must demonstrate to the world both by word and deed that democracy is not just a vague dream, but that it is a living reality.

A first step in the right direction is to cease paying homage to the machine. Unless it can be utilized to serve man and beautify life, it might as well be junked. A civilization is not judged by its wealth or mechanical inventions but by its cultural and spiritual values. Ancient Judea and Greece, though poor in material achievements compared to our own country, nevertheless gave the Western world most of its civilization.

Our next step is to abolish our obsolete laissez-faire economy and substitute in its place a more progressive economy to suit our present needs. Our people cannot for long remain the guardians of a free society with so many of them ill housed, ill clothed, and ill fed. The social and economic structure must be made to serve the interests of the many instead of the privileged few.

To make the necessary adjustments will be no easy task. Many of our preconceived notions and prejudices will have to be discarded, many sacrifices will have to be made before we can hope to succeed in creating a new and better world. But whether we succeed or not, we certainly can no longer afford to remain quiescent. To stand still is to court disaster. The forces of barbarism are already knocking at our gates.

The Negro in American Democracy and in National Defense

WILLIAM PICKENS

We have no perfect democracy here, but we aim at progressive democracy. Out there ahead of us is the star of democracy toward which and by which we steer our ship. And we have been making progress toward that star for much more than 150 years—for a longer, steady voyage toward it than any other great nation has ever yet made. We can work for generations yet toward the great ideal of democracy laid down in our fundamental law.

But also there are no perfect families—or certainly very few of them. We do not become disloyal to the family because it is imperfect or because it has some very imperfect members in it. We carry on the struggle inside, but we still defend the family. I have a sister who is just a year and a little more than a month older than I. When we were children in South Carolina and in Arkansas, this little spitfire undoubtedly threw more pieces of glass and pieces of brick-bat at my head than all the other children in the community put together. But (and this I shall never forget) whenever any other child started throwing glass or stone at my head, I always saw Annie coming—and I never had the slightest doubt as to which side she was going to take—and she never failed. Inside our family she was my terrific rival—but she was never a traitor.

Here we are in the United States, fifteen million people whom we call "the colored people," with more or less African blood in their veins, and more than one hundred and fifteen millions of paler people, whom we call "the white race," mostly of European descent. Just as sure as the cells in us are members of the body, so are we all members of one national organization and march to one destiny. We will be differing, struggling, and contending all the way along toward that destiny, on "race" lines and other lines. In our democracy some of the members are not very democratic—just as I have found in every Christian Church that some of the members are not very Christian. But the church is the church of all its members,

and its ultimate aim is good for all, even for the delinquent members. I have said that there are fifteen millions of the colored people here, and I am aware that even the census man finds thirteen millions of them. Of course, there are many Negroes whom the census man never finds, and others whom he would not be able to classify, even if he found them. But there are at least fifteen millions of people in the United States who have more or less of Negro blood—and know it.

All these Americans are going to defend America, which means defending our rights to continue to fight for more and more democracy in America. We need never compromise on important domestic issues; but in spite of all domestic issues, we offer to national defense our goods, our loyalty, and our lives. In spite of all imperfections, we have plenty that is worth the extreme price that we can pay: we want to defend and preserve the right to stand and talk, and to sit and listen without limitation and without fear to the expression of fact and of decent opinion.

The Treasury of the United States has in mind this broad view of national unity and community of interest, when it offers to all Americans the chance to participate in the defense of our country, our culture, and our hopes. The Secretary of the Treasury and the Defense Savings Staff have made it possible for even the humblest citizen to participate, by saving some of his own property, and at the same time coöperating with his fellow-citizens in defense of the common property. Defense savings stamps permit him who earns the smallest wage to save: he can buy a ten-cent savings stamp, or one for twenty-five or fifty cents. There are stamps also for one dollar or even five dollars. When it is laid up in stamps, the money will be saved for a longer time than when it is put into a vase on the mantel—and while it is in a stamp, it is helping national defense.

It seems that our Government might have had in mind a disadvantaged minority, like the Negro, when they planned these bonds; the bonds are not transferable, and only the person who deposits the money with the Government, can draw the money out again—unless he dies, when the beneficiary, named by him, can draw it. No loan shark or cunning creditor can come between the simplest citizen and his Government and get that citizen's money. Neither the gambling syndicate nor the numbers king has a chance, so long as the United States Government holds that money. The Government is the strongest organization in any nation, but as relations now stand, even if governments fail, the Government of the United States would stand up—or be the last to fail. But if the United States Government should fail, we should not need money—we should need fast feet, so as to get to the tall timbers first and climb up highest. That stuff in the banks, and in the old sock, or in the vase over the fireplace, will not be money, if the Government fails. In case of such a calamity, you would throw that stuff out of your pockets so that your progress would not be impeded.

But we expect to defend America and to keep our right to fight in it. This we shall do by the use of the energy and coöperation of all citizens, from the simplest laborer to the millionaire; from you and me to Rockefeller and Ford. We have many things to settle here, but we will settle them. Our horse sense tells us that we want no outsider to come in and stop us, or impede us, in this process of settlement. Certainly the Hitler outfit, if we yielded to it, would settle all of us, so that we should not even have the joy of seeking our own ends and battling for them.

And let us make no mistake; Hitlerism is the greatest foe to the weakest people in any country which that dictatorship can master. We do have fascist-minded individuals in our own country; but the best way to keep them down is to keep the foreign fascist out. We need have no illusions; the colored people of the United States have more interest in this question of fascism than has any other race in our country. When I am in Georgia, it is a good thing to use Mississippi as an illustration, and I want to say that if there be a man in Mississippi who does not intend that the American Negro shall have equal citizenship rights in America, I am a domestic opponent of that man; but that Mississippi man and I are both Americans and would fight shoulder to shoulder against any outsider whatsoever—from Europe or from Asia—in defense of Mississippi and of Massachusetts. And I would never allow that Mississippian to forget that here in America we have an inside fight for democracy, which must also go on—until settled right.

Our Afro-Americans started coming here in 1619, twelve years after the whites came to stay; but the Africans stopped coming here 82 years ago—and most of the whites in the United States have come here in the last 82 years. That is, most American whites have come to America since the Negro quit coming. Averaging the groups, the oldest American man, next to the American Indian, is the American Negro.

The Negro also helped to create and always to defend this nation; he was a soldier with George Washington—about 5,000 strong in Washington's last battle. He has been for the nation in every great crisis—nearly half a million soldiers in the old World War. This is the Negro's country in the most real sense, and the one he must defend, in order to defend his own future and his posterity.

For three months I have been gathering lists of Negro organizations in various communities, so that we could call the attention of their members to the opportunity both to save their money at a safe and good rate of interest, against the time that is surely coming after the war emergency has passed, and also to help to defend their country while the emergency is on, in order to have the freedom to use their savings after it is over. So far, every leader that has responded from any community, has responded favorably and coöperatively—except in one case. And I have no race feeling when I say that it is interesting that this one case of a leader of a Negro organization that failed to coöperate in a matter for the good of colored people, was not a Negro leader. This non-Negro president of a Negro organization, in a northern city, replied in words likes these: "I regret that I cannot send you the names and addresses of local Negro organizations, in the interest of the Defense Savings program, because I do not approve of war." Do you get that? Here is a man who refuses to help people to prepare against the inevitable aftermath of a war because he does "not approve of war." One does not have to "believe in war," as one believes in a doctrine, a faith, or a philosophy. But if war is a fact, one recognizes the fact. One may hate war, but if he is wise, he still recognizes the fact of its existence. What we were planning to do, was to ask the people of this man's community to prepare against

the effects of a war, not to declare a war. The war is already in existence, and this man and his whole community cannot wipe out that fact. But he is unwilling to have his people prepare to save themselves and their goods in the inevitable after-war shifts and adjustments, just because he does not like the war. As I am calling no names, I am taking the liberty to say that such an attitude of mind is not only illogical but even foolish. I do not like destructive fires any better than this man likes war, but I would think it foolish to stand in the way of an insurance agent who wanted to advise people how to prepare for the aftermath of a fire, by saying to the agent: "I will not give you the names and addresses of the people in the community, because I do not approve of fires." Who in heaven has to approve of a fire? But we can still prepare against the bad conditions which it leaves in its wake. Who has to approve the storm or the flood? But he can still approve of the rescue squads and the Red Cross. The Red Cross helps war victims; and one would be foolish to say: "I cannot help your Red Cross, because I do not believe in wars, and do not approve of fighting."

The United States Treasury's Defense Savings plan is to help the American people both to defend their rights to the liberty they have and to prepare for its continued defense after the holocaust has passed. It is not to make war, but to protect, defend, insure, mitigate. The existence of war is a fact far beyond the Treasury's powers to annihilate. We want to prepare to stand against this flood, and to rescue ourselves when it has passed. That is horse sense.

The Norwegian Church Struggle

KURT D. SINGER

A report received from Norway offers unmistakable evidence that the opposition of the Norwegian Church to the Nazis is steadily gaining in strength. The boycott of Nazi-sponsored religious radio services, for example, is proving increasingly effective, and the attitude of Norway's religious organizations proves day after day that the country's Christian population is unchangeably hostile to the present regime. In this, the population has been helped tremendously by the courageous stand of the bishops, who, as a result, have been drawing more and more fire from the Nazi-baked native authorities. Only recently, for example, the Pastors' Association of Norway received the following telegram from State Councillor Skancke, the head of the government's Church Department:

> Since the matter of the recent bishops' letter is still under investigation, the [Church] Ministry herewith issues a definite prohibition in regard to all public prayers for the bishops.

The directors and members of the Pastors' Association were thereupon called together by their president, and it was agreed that the government order should not be obeyed. The executive secretary of the Church Department, Freyling, was asked to appear before the Association and to tell why the edict was issued. Freyling was unable to give a really satisfactory answer, but in the course of the ensuing discussion it soon became apparent that he himself had been so little in favor of the order that he had called on Skancke twice in one day, and had pleaded with him not to send the telegram off. Skancke, however, had remained firm in his decision. Freyling argued with the Pastors' Association that it would "cause unrest" if the government order were disobeyed and the prayer for the bishops were spoken in open defiance of the official ban. To this, the directors of the Association replied that "unrest" already existed, and that it had been created by others, not by the pastors. On the following day, Freyling again called on Skancke, and the result was that the Pastors' Association finally received a second communication from the Church Department:

> The Department requests that the recent telegram be disregarded as though it had not been sent.

The customary prayer for the bishops was thereupon reintroduced and was again read as previously in all Norwegian Churches.

The Germans have become especially uneasy over the courageous opposition of Bishop Berggrave, and they recently played with the idea of arresting him. An Oslo lawyer, who had been functioning as liaison man between the Church front and the Germans, was asked what consequences such action would be likely to have. The attorney answered that on the day following Bishop Berggrave's arrest, not a single bishop in Norway would perform his duties. When the Germans suggested that the Dean of one of the Cathedrals—presumably Blessing Dahle—could easily be appointed to replace Berggrave, the lawyer replied that not a single Norwegian bishop would consecrate a Dean willing to take Berggrave's post away from him. The matter was then dropped—at least for the time being.

The new Cathechism has been published and is now on sale in all stores. Its editor is the National Socialist pastor and executive secretary of the Church Department, Freyling, and the book bears the title: *Life and Learning—The Teachings of Christianity, with Exercises.* The explanation of the Fourth Commandment has been phrased in this form:

> If Norway is to be made into a good home country for us, we must all be sensitive to our responsibilities. Concern for the nation must go before all other concerns. The well-being of the Community must come before the well-being of each individual. Our first duty is to obey the "Fuehrer" and the government of the State. To resist authority and the State is to resist God's order, and such action will be punished.

Toward the end of the book appears the following paragraph:

> Jesus is like the sun, the great light. Since time immemorial, all human beings, including us Norwegians, have considered the sun as the messenger of God. It was in honor of the sun that the sun-cross [the swastika] appeared on the battle shields of the warriors. Today, once again, the ancient symbol of the sun will gather together the Norwegian people for Norway and God.

This book has been recommended to the elementary schools as a text for religious instruction by the Church Department.

The national hero of Norway today is the Norwegian Archbishop Berggrave, who for months has been spending his days and nights in the Oslo police jail in the Moellergaten, caring for the prisoners there. He is an old-time prison chaplain, and in these critical times

wants to remain as close to the political prisoners as possible.

The bishops of Norway have officially protested against the persecution of the Church by the Nazis. I have compiled their letters of protest in the recently published paper on the church persecutions in Norway —which may be obtained, free of charge, from the Royal Norwegian Legation in Washington, D. C.—and have found that the Norwegian Church, together with the prohibited non-sectarian religious organizations, such as the banned Salvation Army, have now become the most important center of resistance to the German Army of Occupation and the Quisling regime.

Bishop Berggrave, unlike the rest of the Norwegian people, originally favored loyal coöperation with the Germans as the best means of maintaining peace. But after the first few months of the Nazi occupation, Quisling's and Terboven's actions convinced even him, one of the most convinced pacifists in Norway, that collaboration could not work. Only then did Berggrave declare war upon the German and Quisling terror in the land.

Quisling wanted to organize in Norway a separate, state-controlled Nazi church, and in this his appointee, Church Minister Skancke, was slated to be a willing tool. But after the entire Norwegian people declared that they could possibly be prevented from saying a public prayer for King Haakon and the Government in London, but that no one could ever force them to enter a Quisling-controlled Church—a nationwide church strike was threatened—Quisling no longer dared risk a showdown. Bishop Berggrave declared that "for the Norwegian, only God—never Quisling—can be a leader!" and added that he would gladly suffer for his convictions, if the Germans arrested him, just as the German pastor Niemoeller was already suffering.

Thus today in Norway, the suppressed pastoral letters of the seven bishops circulate throughout the country, side by side with the pamphlets of the V campaign, side by side with underground newspapers, and side by side with illegal chain letters, calling for resistance against the Nazis. Psychologically, Quisling committed a fatal blunder when he declared at the recent Race Congress in Frankfurt on the Main [Germany]:

> . . . although Norway had only 10,000 Jews [in truth, there were only 1,400], these managed to find many ready helpers among the faithful Christians. But religion is outdated, and those Christians who still believe in the Old Testament thereby stamp themselves as tools and creatures of international Jewry.

If anything, this speech had precisely the opposite effect from that desired: it solidified *all* the religions in Norway into a single, common front against Hitler and Quisling, and thus, indirectly, helped both Jews and Christians.

That is the state of affairs at this time. The churches and people of Norway are now welded together into one mighty and stable unit which defies attacks through factional wedges. Political parties everywhere have been dissolved, professional and personal quarrels have been forgotten, and 99 per cent of the Norwegian people have only one great desire: to throw Hitler out of the country, so they can then "take care" of their Quislings in their own way.

Negative Independent-Radicalism

VICTOR S. YARROS

There are many thoughtful persons who cannot belong to any of the existing radical parties or groups. They are satisfied that fundamental and far-reaching changes in economic and political relations are coming, but they cannot work with the single-track, doctrinaire, zealous partisans. They do not believe that revolution is just around the corner. They do not favor violent methods, and they know that education of a majority in a free country is a very slow and uncertain process.

In short, they are independent radicals, and their radicalism is mainly negative. That is to say, they know what is wrong with the present economic system, and they have no faith in small, superficial reforms. Specifically, they know that capitalism is bankrupt and doomed, but they expect it to die hard, to resist successfully for many decades, at least, the attacks of the socialists and the communists. Bertrand Russell said some years since that he still believed in socialism and felt that, a century or so hence, the more industrialized and progressive countries would turn to that system and thus solve the grave problems which capitalism has failed to solve and in the nature of things cannot solve without renouncing its basic principles and ceasing to be what it is. This, in essence, is the position of the independent and negative radicals.

The next economic and social order will be socialistic, but that order is not in sight, and the revolutionary groups are too weak and negligible to hasten its advent. The socialists and communists have the right, and the moral duty, to preach their doctrines, to carry on the most vigorous and systematic propaganda their means and numbers permit. But the negative radical prefers to live in the present, not in the future. There are tasks before him which he must tackle, steps which he must support and help take. Of course, the steps should, beyond rational doubt, be in the right direction. He must feel certain that he is moving *toward* the desired goal, and not away from it. But, this assurance being given, the negative radical can afford to be a liberal with a perfectly good conscience. It is not his fault that more is not being done, that the steps in the right direction are not longer and bolder. It is, in truth, *no one's fault*. If we believe in education, in persuasion, not in brute force and tyranny, then it plainly follows that we must patiently build up majority opinion and majority sentiment for the reforms we consider necessary and sound.

And here is the striking difference between the doctrinaire or revolutionary radical and the negative and pragmatic radical. The former despises liberalism, the latter coöperates with it whenever and wherever he considers that liberalism fights for something useful, progressive, and significant. The average liberal has no vision. The negative radical has vision, but he also possesses good will, good sense, and a powerful urge to serve and actively promote his ideal and his philosophy of life and society.

The negative radical is anxious to form and maintain united fronts, whereas the doctrinaire and impetuous radical sneers and rails at such fronts, and sabotages them. In effect, the latter sympathizes with the fanatic's

slogan: "All or Nothing." That is why he so often plays into the hands of reaction. The liberal never commits the blunder of giving aid and comfort to the enemy. Extremes meet. The liberal distrusts the extremist, because he is always constructive and never destructive. He cannot be savage in the name of humanity. He will not accept responsibility for increasing misery and suffering. In a period of transition, of the painful birth of a new order, with its inevitable dislocations, confusions, and hardships, the role of the negative radical and positive liberal, as described above, is particularly important. He best interprets the trend of things. He becomes the mediator and conciliator, and brings with him balm and comfort. He encourages the faint-hearted and he warns the bigot and the maniac. He recalls his contemporaries to the need of good will as well as of reason.

The trouble with the fanatics, of the Right as of the Left, is that they do not know or comprehend the world they live in and the human material they would manipulate. Facts mean nothing to them. A handful of them will talk aggressively of "the people" and the revolution, and will denounce fiercely all "reformists" who are prepared to accept half-measures. To the blind fanatic, the majority of the people are with him at heart, and the liberals are venal, corrupt, in the pay of the plutocratic beneficiaries of privilege.

It is idle to argue with such zealots. It is not idle to argue the case of the humanitarian and the liberal before the great majority, and it is this truth that insures the preservation of the moral and social values of civilization. And the same truth explains the willingness of the negative radical to work earnestly for liberal reforms while fully recognizing their inadequacy.

Tributes to Ralph Cheyney

I. BY ROBERT WHITAKER

There have been many poets, as there are many poets today, who have counted more with the critics and have had vastly more popular patronage than Ralph Cheyney experienced up to the time of his death in mid-October of this year. Death came suddenly to him in a little Texas town while he was on a recital tour, and after a strenuous few months in Florida, where he and Lucia Trent, his wife and fellow-poet, had sought to establish another poetry center. This sort of work they have been doing for many years, spending themselves and whatever income they could get, not for themselves but for a poetic evangelism unlike anything attempted in America before.

It is a good many years now since I became acquainted with them through their unique publication, *Contemporary Verse*. They were residing in Pennsylvania then, as I remember. Later they removed to California, where I came to know them face to face at Sierra Madre, not far from Pasadena. To Pasadena they went later, where they became the center of a widespread association of poets to whom they communicated their enthusiasm for poetry on a high level of poetic technique, but intelligible to the common man, and fired with zeal for a social order in which poets could live with hearts content. To this end the Cheyneys sought some more favorable environment which might become a poetry shrine, a place of pilgrimage on the one hand, and a center of correspondence suitable to their modest means and their simple habits. From such a center they would go forth from time to time and interpret to the lowliest communities as well as to more populous towns and cities, the meaning of the poet's mission to everyday life.

It was a daring venture, the more so when the courage required for it was not for a moment, but for a lifetime of self-denial and devotion careless of sensational recognition. One might well apply to Ralph Cheyney, dying in the noontide of his years, the lines which Ernest Crosby gave us, as my memory serves me now:

> So he died for his faith? that is fine,
> More than most of us do;
> But, say, can you add to that line
> That he lived for it too?
>
> It is easy to die; men have died
> For a wish or a whim;
> From bravado, or passion, or pride;
> Was it harder for him?
>
> But to live; every day to live out
> All the truth that he dreamt;
> While his friends met his conduct with doubt,
> And the world with contempt.
>
> Was it so that he plodded ahead,
> Never turning aside?
> Then we'll talk of the life that he led
> Never mind how he died.

But Ralph Cheyney is not dead. Somewhere that brave spirit, with a vision beyond earthly things, but faithful to earth's opportunities, is singing still. He and his "Elizabeth Browning," to use a figure which those who knew the twain will readily understand—he and Lucia Trent, to give his companion the name which she made for herself to be known and loved afar, will still speak together for that which together bound them while he was here in the body. He will find his memorial, as she will find for herself an expanding work.

II. BY JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

Ralph Cheyney and Lucia Trent were so truly one, not only in their wedded life but in their appointed work as poets, that it is well-nigh impossible to think of one without the other. Yet Ralph is gone, stricken almost without warning, and Lucia with her children must carry on alone. She will do so bravely, her work the solace of her heart and an enduring monument to her beloved husband. But Ralph's death seems nonetheless irreparable. He was a true poet, and one never afraid of a message. The message was no old-fashioned moralism, but a passionate conviction that winged itself in song in his heart, as in some other heart it might have leaped into oratory or burst into music. Ralph Cheyney despised injustice and hated oppression. He cried out aloud against the exploitation of the weak by the strong. Above all, did his soul revolt against war as the final abomination of earth. "Man's inhumanity to man"—into his very life, as into Burns' life, this fact burned like fire, and left him not maimed, but

lifted up and inspired to bear witness against it unto God. Poet became prophet, and prophet poet—this was Cheyney! It is pleasant to think of how he mastered the technique of his art and with Lucia taught its secrets and its disciplines to eager pupils. As poetry editors of this paper, the two blew "trumpets on far horizons" which were like a silver summons to the true and brave everywhere. Anthologies which he edited gave voice to many who would not otherwise perhaps have found voice. How generous he was, how self-forgetting, how ardent and devoted! And dead so young! Is it the fate of poets thus to die? No—Bryant's and Whitman's gray beards, and Tennyson's and Browning's venerable cloaks, deny the suspicion. But Chatterton and Shelley and Keats and Byron and many another passed away ere age had touched them, and Ralph Cheyney is modestly a member of this youthful company. We mourn him for the night that thus came untimely upon him—and salute him for the day that shines in lustre about his name.

The Study Table

Novels from England at War

THIS ABOVE ALL. *By Eric Knight. New York: Harper & Bros. 473 pp. $2.50.*

SHELTER. *By Jane Nicholson. New York: The Viking Press. 241 pp. $2.50.*

WITHOUT SIGNPOSTS. *By Kathleen Wallace. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 298 pp. $2.50.*

THE AMAZING SUMMER. *By Philip Gibbs. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. 305 pp. $2.50.*

THE SUN SHALL GREET THEM. *By David Rame. New York: The Macmillan Co. 290 pp. $2.50.*

An interesting and significant sequence of novels has come out of England during the past year, novels of which it may be said, recalling certain famous words of Prime Minister Churchill, that they are written with the sweat and blood, the toil and tears of the people of Britain.

The first four are among the earliest of this sequence and they serve well to illustrate the sort of story-writing we may expect for some time while England is still under the spell of the tragedy and glory of Dunkirk and while the dauntless people of that little island-kingdom carry on in the defense of their life and liberties. These novels may all be dated "p.D.," i.e. "post Dunkirk," since all of them look back to that dramatic June day in 1940 for much of their inspiration, for it was Dunkirk, which Jane Nicholson describes in her prologue as "the most glorious defeat, the sublimest miracle that ever blazoned the pages of English history," which shook England out of her complacency and made the people of her cities and villages realize that this was no "phoney war" but the great hour of England's destiny.

Eric Knight's novel, *This Above All,* has for months kept its place at the head of both the "most popular" and the "best sellers" lists, and is still going strong. I know of no novel written during the first two years of the first world war that even approaches the disturbing beauty and power of *This Above All.* It is a bit of sensitive and brave writing that could have been done only by one who had completely immersed his soul in the experiences of that terrible summer of 1940 when only the shining presence of a brave hope and the pillar of fire of a unique national spirit stood between England and ultimate disaster. Eric Knight in this story rises above disillusionment and despair, beyond tragedy and disaster, and finds wisdom and courage in the character of a great people which in a day of national crisis is rediscovering itself.

The story runs along with the meeting, love life, and sudden separation by death of its two chief characters, Clive Briggs and Prudence Cathaway. Clive is a veteran of Dunkirk into whose sensitive soul the tragedy of that experience has eaten with a corroding bitterness. He is on leave and quite by accident meets Prudence, a W.A.A.F. girl. As we follow their brief love affair, for only ten days are allotted them, we feel that in these two the author has created the symbol of the new England that is being born out of the travail of this war. Clive has come from the "depths" of that old England where to be born a bastard and poor so often meant a broken and hopeless existence. He has nothing but loathing for the old system of class and special privilege, and plainly speaks his hatred for a rotten diplomacy and a blind statesmanship that had brought the present tragedy upon England and her allies. And he has made up his mind that this old England is not worth fighting for, not after what happened at Dunkirk, and he has decided to desert. Prudence, daughter of a famous London surgeon, listens patiently to his outpourings of wrath and indignation and then tries to convince him that there is another England which is worth both fighting and dying for and that this other, this "new" England, is to be the creation of all those brave and intelligent men and women who are willing to see this terrible thing through.

Chapter 22, where the two lovers argue the issue, fiercely and at times brutally, should be reprinted and distributed among those in America who are still "on the fence." Clive attempts to desert, but realizing the futility of his course both as regards his personal safety as well as the larger cause so near his heart, he returns to his regiment. He has telephoned Prudence to meet him in London where they are to be married; when he arrives, London is undergoing its first heavy bombing; trying to rescue a victim of the raid, he is caught in a falling wall and mortally injured. Even the deft fingers of Prudence's father are unable to save him and he dies as another raid sends Prudence out into the night vowing to carry on in order that the child she carries under her heart may live in a better world. *This Above All* is a powerful and convincing story and a mighty tribute to the heroic qualities of body and mind so obviously being revealed by the bulldog breed.

In *Shelter,* against a London of black-outs and air raids of the summer of 1940, Jane Nicholson sets her men and women of the middle classes and the common people who, despite the ruin and wreckage about them, find time for tea and even theories that may a bit later prove disturbing to Mr. Hitler. There is the "triangle," Jos and Louise Mason and the former's mistress Camma. Their fate is that of millions of Londoners like them who are blasted out of home, job, and security and are compelled to live underground, finding it possible to observe even there the usual amenities and to share with almost "alien" fellow-citizens the sorrows

and joys of shelter experience. In almost every chapter there are passages worth quoting, illustrating the grim courage and uncanny humor by which the average Londoner shows his ability to "take it." Louise Mason is not ashamed to say, "I was very frightened" when the first big bombs fell, and then she goes on to confess, "there is more anger than fear; anger at our city's mutilation, at suffering inflicted on the innocent, anger at the futility of it all, at the waste. . . ."

The imperturbable Englishman makes the best of the primitive conditions of shelter-life and there is a touch of heartening lightness in this description of London's poor, viewing the havoc wrought by bombs to the homes of their "betters":

> The East End is enjoying itself, strolling open-mouthed and round-eyed about the West End. . . . And it goes back, to sit down in the windowless, doorless shells of its houses and tells its less adventurous neighbors that they 'aven't harf made a mess of Bond Street.

You simply cannot lick a people like that, can you?

Kathleen Wallace, in *Without Signposts,* also takes us to England of the summer of 1940, and again it is Dunkirk and the French debacle that determine the tonality and mood of the book. In a little village of Devon, in Midsomer Gabriel, the vital characters of the book meet in the quaint old mansion which "Countess" Marie Lupenska and her daughter Kyra have turned into a "guest-house." The Lupenskas are Russian refugees, "left-overs from yesterday's wars" as Kyra puts it. The former Russian noblewoman has salvaged a heart of gold from her years of wandering and hardship, and now she gathers into her heart and home men, women and children of hospitable England, who seek shelter in village and country from the attacks of the Luftwaffe.

Though the writing becomes at times a bit too sentimental, it is pleasant to follow Kathleen Wallace's story and easy to love her characters, sturdy and valiant all of them in the presence of danger and tragedy that shake but do not break them. It is a book like this which gives new hope to those who follow the battle of Britain with anxiety and apprehension.

"A thousand books will be written about those summer days and nights when Germany sent her squadrons through the air to hurl high-explosive fire over England, with London as the central target, and to smash the spirit as well as the bodies of its people." This is a quotation from Philip Gibbs' *The Amazing Summer,* which might as well have been called "This Amazing People." Again, it is a story about simple people in and about London, men and women who have learned not to be afraid of the "terror by night nor of the destruction that wasteth at noonday."

We are told first the amazing story of Flight-Lieutenant Guy Moreton's lucky landing behind the German lines in the France "after Dunkirk" and of his miraculous escape to England where he is joined by a small group of French intellectuals and by the artist Bertrand Blanchard who have come across the channel to join the forces of General de Gaulle. The story continues in Spurfold Green, Surrey, just out of London, where the Moretons, including father and mother, the girl Anthea, and the two boys, Guy and David, both fliers, are at home. How they and their relatives and friends meet the stark terror that hovers over England, how they face bombing, death, and destruction with invincible spirit is the theme of a story which may lack the literary skill of great writing, but which makes up for lack of technique with human interest and prophetic promise. These quotations among many others record the indomitable spirit that is winning the battle of Britain, winning it for freedom and democracy: "The old women who go on with their knitting while the bombs are falling and the young girls who laugh at air-raid warnings and carry on, and the bus conductors and firemen—that's the crowd whom I salute. I'm proud of being a Londoner." Two things spoiled Hitler's plans for the conquest of Britain, "the R.A.F. and the spirit of the Londoners. It refused to break, it refused to be cowed, it refused to cry for peace." We feel as we read that the spirit of Dunkirk and the spirit of London cannot be crushed.

If the first four novels just discussed all take their starting-point from the days immediately following Dunkirk, *The Sun Shall Greet Them* is the first novel out of England to take Dunkirk itself for its theme, Dunkirk as revealed in the soul of one of its heroes and in the soul of an Englishwoman, the understanding and lyrical Frayle.

David Rame is the literary pseudonym for the young South African writer, Arthur D. Divine, who received the Distinguished Service Medal for civilian services in helping remove troops from France after the debacle of the summer of 1940. He was wounded on his rescue mission, served thereafter in the British Ministry of Information, and later as naval observer with the British Mediterranean Fleet. He writes of Dunkirk and its horrors with a "Doré-like realism" as one reviewer puts it, for he "was there"; his little white motorboat, Falcon, was one of the "Armada of the beaches," one of the "navy of salvation," and with body *and* soul he fought a battle as valiant as that fought by any one of those brave boys he helped bring back to Britain, to life, and to a new hope.

It is a book beautiful in its lyrical descriptions of English countryside and the simple things of English

(*Continued on page* 172)

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The Study Table

(*Continued from page* 171)

life; and it is a powerful document of a man's war within himself against the three fears which Rame describes in these words:

> He [Brandon, the book's hero] had been afraid three times. The first time he had been afraid they were too late to save England. The second time he had been afraid that there was nothing left worth saving—nothing left in all the world. The third time he had been afraid of being afraid, and the third fear was the greatest of them all, for the third fear had in it all the others.

It is gentle, tender Frayle, the child of simplicity and of imagination, who helps Brandon overcome these fears and lifts his spirit to meet the terrible ordeal of three trips to Dunkirk, and welcomes him home, badly wounded, but happy and proud and so utterly understanding when he hears the message that Latteran, Frayle's artist-uncle, sends him:

> Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
> And say, "These wounds I had on Crispin's day."

It was Frayle who had said, just before Brandon left for the third crusade of rescue and mercy, "Poets ought not to go to battles. They ought only to write of them, about them." The readers of *The Sun Shall Greet Them* may disagree, because Brandon, the poet who here thinks and dreams and writes, *has* been to battle, and he has returned with a glory larger and more abiding than any laurel wreath, with conviction, with courage, with beauty, and with truth; the glory of those who have seen and felt, beginning at Dunkirk, "the vast design of England waking."

KARL M. CHWOROWSKY.

Correspondence

Opinion Changed

To UNITY:

Much as I have admired all these years the editor of UNITY, and even though I wrote him some years ago that I had reached the pacifist position, now at the risk of being called a "backslider," in good old Methodist parlance, I am compelled to reach the position of the managing editor of UNITY, and of the editor of the *Christian Leader*.

"You can't do business with Hitler." We might ask: What would Jesus do in the present situation? At the risk of being called "irreverent," I would reply: No one knows, and what of it anyhow? Jesus was a Jew, the greatest Jew who ever lived. Taking that point into consideration, one might think how Jesus could do business with Hitler!

GEORGE L. MASON.

Orange, Massachusetts.

UNITY Read from Cover to Cover

To UNITY:

Since you get so many letters from subscribers to UNITY—I have noticed lately that some of them are not too complimentary—it occurs to me that it is occasionally a heartening thing to learn that there are people who read your publication very carefully, as soon as it reaches them, and who find many thoughtful and worthwhile contributions in it.

In your November, 1941, issue, which I read from cover to cover, I was very much impressed with the article, "The Twenty-Fifth Atlanta Conference," which was written by an old friend whom I knew as a mere youth, namely Mr. W. E. B. DuBois. I shall never forget his book, *Souls of Black Folk*. I was likewise impressed with "The Youth Odyssey" by Ruth Shirley; certainly "The Forbidden Theme" by Karl M. Chworowsky was stimulating. I think the Reverend Chworowsky should be thanked for calling your readers' attention to the *Christian Century* article.

Up to two years ago, I think I would have applauded loudly everything that John Haynes Holmes had to say in UNITY, and I still approve a good many of the things he says in his editorial comments but I am inclined to be wholeheartedly behind the more practical and realistic point-of-view of the managing editor.

PHILIP L. SEMAN.

Chicago, Illinois.

Hitler's Conscience

To UNITY:

My sympathes are with Roger E. Warner in the November issue regarding Hitler—but I cannot conceive, by the wildest imagination, of Hitler having even the *smallest* trace of remorse for any of the misery he has caused. On the contrary, I imagine his conscience has become so seared that the more bombs dropped on defenseless women and children, the more barbaric and ruthless all of his actions are, the more he rejoices. If he isn't the anti-Christ of all history, there never was one. Nero to my mind was a mere puppet beside Hitler.

NELLIE M. MASON.

Orange, Massachusetts.

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